AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1 through 10 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A video combining method for superimposing a virtual image generated by a computer on [[the]] a real world observed by a user, said method comprising the steps of:

inputting [[an]] a real image obtained by image sensing the real world;

inputting position and orientation information of ~~the user's~~ a view point of the user;

generating a virtual image based on ~~said~~ the position and orientation information;

extracting a virtual image elimination area of ~~said~~ the virtual image; and

combining ~~said~~ the virtual image with ~~said~~ the real image ~~obtained by image sensing based on~~ except for ~~said~~ the virtual image elimination area,

wherein the virtual image elimination area allows the user to observe the corresponding area of the real image which is located behind the virtual image and which normally cannot be observed by the user due to the virtual image being superimposed on the area.

2. (Currently Amended) A video combining apparatus for superimposing a virtual image generated by a computer on [[the]] a real world observed by a user, said apparatus comprising:

an image input unit adapted to input [[an]] a real image obtained by image sensing the real world;

a position and orientation information input unit adapted to input position and orientation information of ~~the user's~~ a view point of the user;

a virtual image generation unit adapted to generate a virtual image based on ~~said~~ the position and orientation information;

an elimination area extraction unit adapted to extract a virtual image elimination area of ~~said~~ the virtual image; and

a combining unit adapted to combine ~~said~~ the virtual image with ~~said~~ the real image ~~obtained by image sensing based on~~ except for ~~said~~ the virtual image elimination area,

wherein the virtual image elimination area allows the user to observe the corresponding area of the real image which is located behind the virtual image and which normally cannot be observed by the user due to the virtual image being superimposed on the area.

3. (Currently Amended) A video combining method for superimposing a virtual image on a video image of **[[**the**]]** a real world observed by a user, said method comprising:

an image input step of inputting a video image of the real world ~~observed by the user~~;

a position and orientation information input step of inputting position and orientation information of ~~the user's~~ a view point of the user;

a virtual image generation step of generating a virtual image based on ~~said~~ the position and orientation information;

a designated area detection step of detecting **[[**a**]]** an elimination ~~predetermined~~ area designated by the user using a designation means; and

a superimposition step of superimposing ~~said~~ the virtual image on ~~said~~ the video image except a virtual image of a portion corresponding to the elimination area ~~in the video image~~ detected **[[**at**]]** in said designated area detection step.

wherein the elimination area allows the user to observe the corresponding area of the real image which is located behind the virtual image and which normally cannot be observed by the user due to the virtual image being superimposed on the area.

4. (Currently Amended) The video combining method according to claim 3, wherein [[at]] in said designated area detection step, the elimination area ~~in the video image~~ is detected from the video image ~~obtained by image sensing~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The video combining method according to claim 4, wherein [[at]] in said designated area detection step, a marker ~~provided in area~~ on the designation means ~~operated by the user, included in the video image obtained by image sensing,~~ is detected from the video image, and the elimination area ~~in the video image~~ is detected based on [[the]] a position of the marker in the video image.

6. (Currently Amended) The video combining method according to claim 3, further comprising an information input step for inputting a position and orientation information of the designation means,

wherein [[at]] in said designated area detection step, the elimination area ~~in the video image~~ is detected from the video image based on the position and orientation information of ~~area~~ the designation means ~~operated by the user~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The video combining method according to claim 3, wherein [[at]] in said designated area detection step, the elimination area ~~in the video image~~ is detected from the video image based on information on an area surrounded with a particular color in the video image.

8. (Currently Amended) The video combining method according to claim 3, wherein [[at]] in said designated area detection step, the elimination area ~~in the video image~~ is detected from the video image based on information on a closed area formed by ~~the user's~~ at least one hand of the user.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium holding program code to realize a video combining method for superimposing a virtual image generated by a computer on [[the]] a real world observed by a user, by a computer, comprising:

process procedure code for inputting [[an]] a real image of the real world obtained by image sensing;

process procedure code for inputting position and orientation information of ~~the user's~~ a view point of the user;

process procedure code for generating a virtual image based on the position and orientation information;

process procedure code for extracting a virtual image elimination area; and

process procedure code for combining ~~said~~ the virtual image with ~~said~~ the real image ~~obtained by image sensing based on~~ except for ~~the information on said~~ the virtual image elimination area,

wherein the virtual image elimination area allows the user to observe the corresponding area of the real image which is located behind the virtual image and which normally cannot be observed by the user due to the virtual image being superimposed on the area.

10. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium holding program code to realize a video combining method for superimposing a virtual image on a video image of ~~the~~ a real world observed by a user, by a computer, comprising:

process procedure code for inputting a video image of the real world ~~observed by the user~~ obtained by image sensing;

process procedure code for inputting position and orientation information of ~~the user's~~ a view point of the user;

process procedure code for generating a virtual image based on ~~said~~ the position and orientation information;

process procedure code for detecting ~~a predetermined~~ an elimination area designated by the user using a designation means; and

process procedure code for superimposing ~~said~~ the virtual image on ~~said~~ the video image obtained by image sensing except a virtual image of a portion corresponding to the elimination area ~~in the video image~~ detected **[[**at**]]** in said detection process,

wherein the elimination area allows the user to observe the corresponding area of the real image which is located behind the virtual image and which normally cannot be observed by the user due to the virtual image being superimposed on the area.